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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 3934  
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RUEHDJ/AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI 4961  
RUEHFN/AMEMBASSY FREETOWN 0157  
RUEHKM/AMEMBASSY KAMPALA 2455  
RUEHKH/AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM 1747  
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 2503  
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 2427  
RHMFIUU/CJTF HOA  
RHMFIUU/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL

UNCLAS NAIROBI 004788

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LONDON AND PARIS FOR AFRICA WATCHERS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KDEM](#) [PREL](#) [KE](#) [PGOV](#)

SUBJECT: KENYA ELECTIONS: STATE OF PLAY ON ELECTION  
OBSERVATION EFFORTS

REF: A. NAIROBI 04567

[1](#)B. NAIROBI 4457 AND PREVIOUS

#### SUMMARY & INTRODUCTION

[1](#)1. Kenya will be awash in election observers by the time voters go to the polls on December 27. Roughly 17,500 international and domestic observers will cover about 27,500 polling stations in 210 parliamentary constituencies, in addition to party agents who will monitor the proceedings on behalf of their candidates. The Electoral Commission of Kenya has encouraged both domestic and international observers, maintaining a wide open door policy.

[1](#)2. Embassy Nairobi is deploying over 160 Kenyan and American staff, easily the largest and widest reaching of all the international observation missions. On December 18 and 20, we are providing observation training to approximately 350 observers from over 20 different diplomatic missions. We are hosting the multi-national control room on election-day. We have organized media events and the provision of observation forms, a databank, and a coordinated deployment plan. There is shared concern within the donor community, however, over the disorganized, behind-schedule domestic observation effort, which aspires to train and deploy 17,000 people during the next two holiday-laden weeks. End Summary & Introduction.

#### OUR OBSERVATION EFFORTS

[1](#)3. Embassy Nairobi is deploying over 160 Kenyan and American staff, easily the largest and widest reaching of all the international observation missions. We have mobilized all available resources to maximize our footprint on the ground. We will deploy 54 teams of observers to polling stations in all eight provinces. Deployments will be made to areas where there are competitive parliamentary races, women candidates are vying, and/or there exists a high potential for vote manipulation.

[1](#)4. We are hosting a multi-national control room on December 27-28 to facilitate the safety and security of mission staff, coordinate logistics and to communicate observation results.

(see para 11, below).

#### RESIDENT DIPLOMATIC OBSERVATION EFFORTS

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¶15. According to a survey undertaken by the Swiss Embassy, approximately 20 resident diplomatic missions intend to deploy diplomatic staff to observe the elections. These nations include South Africa, Japan, Philippines, Afghanistan (USG-sponsored), the Ukraine, Serbia, Indonesia, and Argentina. After our own observation efforts, the British High Commission is expected to provide the next largest contingent. Some smaller European missions may second staff to the European Union Observation Mission.

#### OFFICIAL INTERNATIONAL OBSERVER EFFORTS

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¶16. The European Union will deploy an observation mission, headed by German Member of the European Parliament, Graf Alexander Lambsdorff. The mission is expected to number 136 observers. Thirty-six long-term observers arrived in early December and then deployed to regional centers.

¶17. The Commonwealth of Nations Secretariat (formerly the British Commonwealth) is also sending an observation mission, headed by former President of Sierra Leone, Ahmed Tejan Kabbah. We expect this mission will have approximately 15 observers.

¶18. The African Union was expected to send a delegation of 20 observers, but has canceled its mission, allegedly because the GOK invitation was not delivered the requisite two months before the elections.

#### PRIVATE INTERNATIONAL OBSERVERS

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¶19. At this time, the only private international observation that mission is aware of is that of the International Republican Institute, which will consist of approximately 20 observers. This Delegation will be headed by former A/S African Affairs Constance Newman.

#### DOMESTIC OBSERVATION EFFORTS

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¶10. Kenyan civil society organizations will provide the bulk of all election observers. With USG and other donor support, 13 civil society organizations have created the Kenyan Domestic Observers Forum (KEDOF), an umbrella organization meant to coordinate Kenyan domestic observation efforts for these elections. KEDOF has received significant technical assistance from UNDP. KEDOF expects to deploy 17,000 observers.

#### COORDINATION MECHANISMS

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¶11. We have actively engaged other like minded diplomatic missions (through the LIMID-P group) to coordinate resident diplomatic observation efforts. Resident international observers will undergo joint observation training hosted by the USG and will use common observation forms. On the day of the vote, resident diplomatic observers will relay observations to a joint control room hosted by the US Mission. This joint control room will coordinate information flows from the field and will be co-located with the US Mission control room.

#### COMMENT

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¶12. Given the closeness of the election contest, the perceived legitimacy of the election outcome could determine whether the losing side accepts the results with minimal disturbances. Our staff's commendable response to the call for volunteers over the Christmas holiday allows us to deploy teams to all sections of the country, providing a

representative view of the vote as a whole. In addition, our decision to host the joint observation control room will provide much greater access to real-time information; allowing a more comprehensive analysis of the election process.     END COMMENT  
RANNEBERGER